BLUE RIBBON PROGRAM

Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Consumer Health Services Section

What is the Blue Ribbon Program?

The Blue Ribbon Program is a voluntary system that food establishments in Wyoming may participate in to better manage food safety in their place of business. This program is based on the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points principles (HACCP). Entry into the program means that a food establishment has written a HACCP plan and has successfully implemented a HACCP system for the purpose of reducing the risk of food related injury and illness.

By using HACCP, your business makes a commitment to the active management of food borne illness risks and is no longer relying on the regulator to spot potential food safety hazards. The Blue Ribbon Program is intended to be pro-active and to help establish a more effective partnership between the regulatory agency and the food establishment. In this program, we hope to combine our knowledge of public health with your expertise to provide a safer product for your customers.

HACCP is a concept that was originally developed by the Pillsbury Company and the Army for use by NASA in producing safe food for the space program. It s central theme is control of each step in order to control for a safe outcome. In this process a firm that makes food can identify the hazards most likely to occur, set up a simple plan to control those hazards and take any corrective actions needed before a problem occurs. HACCP is endorsed by the World Health Organization, the Food and Drug Administration, the USDA and is beginning to be used by many large food companies nationwide.

This Brochure is intended to explain the voluntary Blue Ribbon Program and is distributed for the purpose of encouraging businesses to participate. If you have any questions about this program, feel free to contact your local health department or local Consumer Health Services inspector. You may contact our central office at (307) 777-7211.

Key Terms

HACCP Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point - This is a cooperative program where industry develops their own food safety system and regulatory agencies can assist.

CP Control Point - is a point, step, or procedure in the flow of food where hazards can be reduced or eliminated.

CCP Critical Control Point - is a stage in the flow of food where:

- Hazards can be prevented, reduced or eliminated; and
- Later stages won t correct safety problems if not controlled here. The kill step .

SOP s Standard Operating Procedures - is the baseline for setting up any food safety system and our being used to assist in training employees.

How Does it Work?

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Consumer Health Services Section (CHS) will help to educate you and your staff on the HACCP principles and how to use them. We will then assist you in developing your management system. Once this system is in place and operating, our HACCP team will visit your establishment to verify that the system is working the way it should. After the verification step, we will officially enter you into the program, award your plaque and give you copies of the Blue Ribbon pamphlet that you may use to inform your customers of your participation. We also provide several Blue Ribbon signs that you can use in your establishment if you wish. At the official entry into the program we will release information to the press and hold a small ceremony to present your plaque.

Each year, your local CHS inspector will verify that your system is still in place and operating. After verification, you will be awarded a new year to place on your plaque indicating your continued participation in the program.

Procedure:

1. Contact Consumer Health Services.

2. Attend the Advanced Going for the Gold course or equivalent HACCP training.

3. You begin to evaluate your hazards and write your HACCP plan.

4. We are available for consultation or assistance at any time.

5. When you are ready for implementation, we can conduct additional training in your establishment or assist you with additional training for your employees.

6. Test your HACCP plan and make adjustments (again, we are available to help).

7. When the plan is operational and you are satisfied with any adjustments, contact us to send our verification team to check it out.

8. After the your plan has been verified, we will officially enroll you in the program.

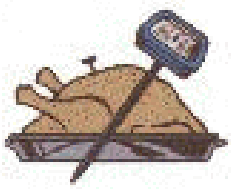
9. We continue to be available for assistance at any time.

10. Annual verification by CHS and renewal of your status in the program.

STEPS TO DEVELOP YOUR BLUE RIBBON PROGRAM

When a food safety system is put in place it should focus on the things that cause people to get sick. The things to consider when setting up a system are:

EMPLOYEE TRAINING



TIME/TEMPERATURE CONTROLS

PERSONAL HYGIENE

CROSS CONTAMINATION

CLEANING & SANITIZING

INSECT & RODENT CONTROL

EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAM

Employees are trained and knowledgeable in sound food safety practices which apply to the establishment.

Managers are trained in HACCP based food safety, which can be ServSafe Certification or similar training.

Employees handling food must be trained/knowledgeable in food safety (HACCP related principles)

Examples:

1. In-House training by inspector or certified manager

2. Attend formal training classes such as Going for the Gold

3. On-going training

4. Can also use training materials in addition to the above methods such as videos, written material, posters, etc.

TIME / TEMPERATURE CONTROLS

STEP 1 - ASSESS THE HAZARDS

Identify the potentially hazardous foods.

Example:

Look at any foods that may contain high protein or high moisture and capable of growing bacteria.

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY THE CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Review food receiving, handling, preparation, and service to see where steps need to be taken to eliminate bacteria from growing.

Example:

Have you identified the critical control points for receiving, cooking, cooling, holding, and reheating foods.

STEP 3 - DEVELOP A PLAN TO CONTROL CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

This includes required temperature limits on foods being prepared, cooked, held, cooled, or reheated.

Example:

Holding hot foods at 140F and cold foods at 40F.

Cooling foods to f or below in less than six (6) hours.

Reheating foods to 165F.

STEP 4 - SET UP METHODS TO MONITOR CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Monitoring is setting up a procedure/method to assure the proper temperatures are being met.

Examples:

Checking the final cooking temperatures on foods with an accurate thermometer.
Checking foods to assure they are cooled to 40F or below in six (6) hours.

STEP 5 - ESTABLISHING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IF CRITICAL LIMITS ARE EXCEEDED

What do you do when you monitor a temperature and it is wrong?

Example:

Finding a hot food in the steam table being held at 120F after two (2) hours. Corrective action would be to reheat the foods on the stove/oven to 165F and place back in the steam table. Also check the steam table to assure it works properly.

STEP 6 - SETTING UP AN EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM.

Setting up a record, form, or log sheet which indicates the proper temperatures for cooking, holding, cooling, reheating and are being met.

Example:

Keep any records simple, easy, and doable.

STEP 7 - CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

Periodically the manager/owner should be checking to see if the system is working.

When changes need to be made to your system or a procedure is not being followed management should correct it.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

STEP 1 - ASSESSING THE HAZARDS

Hazards are contaminated hands, sick/ill employees, cuts & burns.

Do you have a policy in place to address personal hygiene?

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY THE CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

What do you do when an employee is ill, doesn't wash hands, or has cuts or burns on exposed body parts?

STEP 3 - DEVELOP A PLAN TO CONTROL CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Is there a program in place to teach employees about proper handwashing, illnesses/bacteria spread by foods/hands, proper bandaging and proper hygienic practices you want?

STEP 4 - SET UP METHODS TO MONITOR CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Are handwashing stickers available above all sinks?

Are employees periodically tested on proper hygienic practices?

Are management or other employees checking to see if one another are following set procedures?

STEP 5 - ESTABLISHING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IF CRITICAL LIMITS ARE EXCEEDED

What do you do if an employee is not following the outlined procedures set up by management?

Example: If an employee comes to work without washing their hands, do you make them watch a video on handwashing, read over the policy again, etc.?

STEP 6 - SETTING UP AND EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM

Do you keep records on file of when an employee is trained on personal hygiene?

STEP 7 - CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

Is your program for personal hygiene working?

CROSS CONTAMINATION

STEP 1 - ASSESS THE HAZARDS

Identify the points in food storage, handling, and preparation where foods may be contaminated by personnel, other foods or foreign substances.

Examples:

Employee handling raw meats then ready-to-eat foods without washing hands.

Storing raw meats above ready-to-eat foods.

Storing chemicals above food items.

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY THE CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Identifying areas where cross contamination could occur.

STEP 3 - DEVELOP A PLAN TO CONTROL CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Set up a procedure to control cross contamination.

STEP 4 - SET UP METHODS TO MONITOR CCP'S.

Examples:

Separate areas for handling raw & ready-to-eat foods.

Separate cutting boards for specific foods.

Storing raw meats on lower shelves in cooler.

STEP 5 - ESTABLISHING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IF CRITICAL LIMITS ARE EXCEEDED.

What do you do when cross contamination occurs?

Example:

If meat juices were to drip or leak onto a ready-to-eat food, the food would be disposed.

STEP 6 - SET UP AN EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM.

Written procedures must be in place to prevent cross contamination.

Training to prevent cross contamination should be in place for all employees.

Shelves in coolers may be labeled as to where to store foods properly.

STEP 7 - CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

Are employees being periodically trained on preventing cross contamination?

Management may ask questions of employees to assure they understand cross contamination.

Check storage of meat products in coolers periodically.

CLEANING & SANITIZING

STEP 1 - ASSESS THE HAZARDS

Do you have a process for cleaning and sanitizing of equipment and utensils.

Cleaning food contact surfaces of equipment and utensils daily.

Assuring the temperature on the dishwasher is adequate.

Assuring the concentration of sanitizer is adequate.

What equipment and utensils need to be cleaned daily, weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, etc.?

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY THE CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Example:

Cleaning of equipment and utensils used for both raw and ready-to-eat foods and different species of animal.

Cleaning of equipment and utensils used at room temperature for more than four (4) hours.

STEP 3 - DEVELOP A PLAN TO CONTROL CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Example:

Set up a procedure for cutting/preparing raw species of meat.

Set up a procedure for handling raw and ready-to-eat foods.

STEP 4 - SET UP METHODS TO MONITOR CCP'S

Example:

Observing or check pieces of equipment and utensils left at room temperature to assure they are cleaned every four (4) hours.

If time is used for preparing/cutting meats assure they are following time lines.

If an area is designated for preparing only certain types of food, observe to assure it is happening.

Checking temperature on dishwasher to assure it is correct.

STEP 5 - ESTABLISHING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IF CRITICAL LIMITS ARE EXCEEDED.

Example:

If critical limits exceed four (4) hour limit, operations should stop and equipment should be cleaned.

Any equipment and utensil contaminated should be cleaned immediately before using.

STEP 6 - SETTING UP AN EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM

Example:

Have a procedure/schedule for cleaning and sanitizing equipment and utensils.

STEP 7 - CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

Example:

Check the sanitizer concentration with test strips.

Check the temperature on the manifold on the dishwasher.

INSECT & RODENT CONTROL

STEP 1 - ASSESS THE HAZARDS

Example:

Signs of insects or rodents.

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY THE CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Example:

How are they getting in?

Are there any openings; pipes, vents, doors, etc.?

STEP 3 - DEVELOP A PLAN TO CONTROL CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Example:

Looking around perimeter of building to see if there are entry holes or harborage.

Have a map locating all the rodent control devices.

Use of a commercial exterminator and know what kind of service they provide.

STEP 4 - SET UP METHODS TO MONITOR CCP'S

Example:

Periodically check facilities for signs of rodents and insects.

Check traps or pest strips or observe specified areas for signs.

STEP 5 - ESTABLISHING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IF CRITICAL LIMITS ARE EXCEEDED

Example:

If signs are found, more frequent checks should be made.

Area should be cleaned and sanitized where evidence or rodents and insects are caught.

Stepped up control methods (more traps, more strips, more checks).

STEP 6 - SETTING UP AN EFFECTIVE RECORDING SYSTEM

Example:

If a licensed exterminator is used, they should leave the paper work to show what has been done to control insects and rodents.

If conducting checks on your own, you can mark on a calendar the days anyone checks for signs or evidence of problems.

STEP 7 - CONTINUOUS EVALUATION

Example:

Use a flashlight to check under plates, corners and crevices.

Review if trap locations are effective and need to be reset.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAM

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